

Fun Ideas

Don't let Walk to School end after just one day. There are many variations of Walk to School programs that may suit your community's needs and resources. Schools may consider talking to the PTA or local wellness groups about providing incentives. Try any of the following to keep kids (and adults) walking *to, at, and from* school.

Walk the USA Schools use the actual amount of miles it would take to walk across the US to track their progress. Use the actual amount of miles it would take to walk across the USA to track their progress. Teachers, students, and families walk together at school and outside of school. Everyone keeps track of the amount of miles, blocks or steps that they walk each day, and then they add their miles to the map. A faculty member can mow and/or paint a colored line outlining a 1/10 mile or quarter-mile track on the playground. Then, students, teachers, and families walk around the school's playground and track, and to and from school. Everyone keeps track of the amount of miles they walk each day and then they add their miles to the map. This program brings K-6 grade families together to "walk across the United States."



- **Encourage family involvement** – Allow students to double their mileage when they walk with a family member. Require that they bring a signed slip from the family member with whom they walked.



- **Promote the use of local trails** - Grant students extra miles or a prize when they use local trails. Require that they bring a signed slip from a parent to verify their use of the trails. For information on SD trails visit <http://www.sdgap.info/parks/Index.htm>

- **Class-by-class walking competitions** - Reward the class that has the greatest percentage of students walking to school at least three days a week, and the one that collectively walks the greatest distance. Also reward the class that increases their percentage of walkers the most over the month, semester, or year.

- **Walk at school opportunities** - Not all children live close enough to walk, so provide recess or PE time for walking, so that all classes have an equal chance. Encourage students to invite family members to join their walk. Arrange for middle school, junior high, and high school students to lead the walks once a week or twice a week. Invite local law enforcement, Fire Department or "local celebrities" such as the governor or McGruff the Crime Dog to walk with the kids.

- **Pedometer-based walking program** - A pedometer is a small, pager-sized step counter worn on the hip; some are available for as little as \$4 a piece in bulk. Get them for kids and see if they can increase their total daily steps because of their walks to and from school.

- **Walk somewhere special** - Keep track of your classes or school's total, accumulated walking distance, and walk to a specific destination — say, in Europe, Asia, or South America. Study your target destination and plan a party based on the local culture for when you "arrive."



- **Hold Top Ten contests** - Have students list the top ten ways they got parents to walk with them, top ten funny things they saw while walking, top ten reasons to walk, top ten things that

must be improved, top ten walking songs or poems. Have monthly contests or votes to pick the best ten school-wide.

- **Mile-walk challenge** - Do the mile walk challenge. Walk a mile for time at the beginning of the year, then repeat after eight months of walking to (or at) school.

- **Write to walking pen pals** - Go to the International Walk to School website <http://www.iwalktoschool.org/> and find a nation (with walkers) that's interesting to your students. Contact the country coordinator to link with a participating school for walking pen pals to share ideas and experiences.



Walking School Bus Program



This program encourages children to walk to school daily in groups led by adults. It is much like a carpool, but everyone is walking. The Walking School Bus Program was designed to make walking to school safer by providing adult supervision for children who walk to school. It brings together a small group of students with one or more adults on their walks to and from school. Typically, the students live near one another. Even if they already walk to school, the benefit of the Walking School Bus is that it provides a consistent, supervised system in which children can walk to school under the watchful eye of an adult. *For an excellent case study on a successful Walking School Bus program visit www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/buses/GTSS/case4.html*

- **"Remote" drop off areas** - Designate areas 1/4 to 1/2 mile from school where parents can drop off children and they can safely walk the remaining distance to school. This assures that even children who must be driven to school get to take part in the fun and enjoy the benefits.

- **Safe Routes to School programs** - Encourage communities to identify barriers to safe walking to school, such as a lack of sidewalks or a dangerous crossing and work with community partners to create safe routes to school.

- **Classroom Learning** - Teachers can incorporate lessons on safe pedestrian skills, air pollution, and physical activity into the school curriculum. *For useful teaching ideas, ideas with reproducible activity sheets, young TransNet, and free lesson plans on road safety linked to "Walk to School" visit www.walktoschool.org.uk/teachers/*



- **Young Mentors** - Older kids can be mentors to younger kids. Invite middle, high school, or college students to take part in planning and developing your Kids Walk-to-School program. Younger kids typically look up to older kids and are more likely to be excited about a project when they are involved.



- **No Idling Project** - You can reduce automobile emissions by walking to school, but if you must drive to school you can also reduce emissions by turning your car off when waiting to pick your child up from school.

Here are websites with more Fun Ideas!

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatSMARTplayhardhealthyLifestyle/>

http://www.bam.gov/sub_physicalactivity/index.html

